

**Collection
OM 0010**

**Graham/Powell Land Indentures
1772**

Table of Contents

User Information
Historical Sketch
Scope and Content
Container List

Processed by
Rebecca K. Ottinger
29 September 2008

**Thomas Balch Library
208 W. Market Street
Leesburg, VA 20176**

USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 items

COLLECTION DATE: 1772

PROVENANCE: Loudoun County Public Library Administration, Leesburg, VA.

ACCESS RESTRICTIONS: Collection open for research.

USE RESTRICTIONS: Physical characteristics and conditions affect use of this material. Photocopying not permitted.

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from Thomas Balch Library.

CITE AS: Graham/Powell Land Indentures (OM 0010), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA.

ALTERNATIVE FORMATS: None

OTHER FINDING AIDS: None

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1989.0005

NOTES: Formerly filed in NUCMC 65 with Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Collection.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

John Graham (1711-1787) was born in Dumfries, Scotland. When his family encountered financial hardship, he came to America. He settled in Prince William County, Virginia, where he became a successful merchant and planter. He served as County Clerk of Fairfax County, Virginia, and later, County Clerk for Prince William County. He donated 60 acres of land that became the town of Dumfries, named for his birthplace.

Leven Powell (1737-1810) was born in Prince William County. He moved to Loudoun County in 1763 where he engaged in mercantile business and operated a grist mill from 1771-1782. He served in the Revolutionary War first as a major and later a lieutenant colonel. After the war he was active in Virginia politics including serving as a delegate to Virginia's convention to ratify the U.S. Constitution in 1788.

On 7 January 1763 Powell bought 500 acres of land in Loudoun County from Joseph Chinn (n.d.), who had inherited the property from his father Rawleigh Chinn (1684-ca. 1741). Soon after Powell bought the land, he sub-divided 50 acres and developed a plan for a town which showed 70 lots, separated by two major streets—Washington Street and Madison Street. Since the land was situated on Ashby Gap Road (now Route 50) about half-way between Alexandria and Winchester, Powell named it Middleburg. The town was officially established on 2 November 1787 by an act of the Virginia Assembly.

Sources:

Family Files (Chinn, Ellzey, Powell, Graham), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

Graham/Powell Land Indentures (OM 0010), Thomas Balch Library, Leesburg, VA

Lee, Bill and LaVonne. *The Ancestors and Descendents of Lt. Col. Leven Powell (1737-1810)*. La Feria, TX: B. & L. Lee, 2006.

Scheel, Eugene. *The History of Middleburg and Vicinity*. Warrenton, VA: Piedmont Press, 1987.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The collection contains two land indentures for a 1,175 acre parcel of land. An indenture was an early form of a deed in which two copies of a document were

made and they were cut apart in scallops so that each party had a copy which could be verified by matching the scallop pattern.

During the 1770s the families of Leven Powell and Charles Chinn began to engage in a real competition for land in Loudoun County. In 1772, Charles Chinn bought a 349 acre parcel previously owned by John Grant (n.d.). The two indentures in the collection are from the same year, when Leven Powell bought a 1,175 acre tract of land from John Graham for £30. The 1,175 acre parcel of land was originally purchased jointly by John Grant and John Graham in 1743; ownership had passed to Graham by survivorship. The first document, signed on 11 November 1772, was a one-year lease between Leven Powell and John Graham, which may have acted as an option to secure the land until arrangements could be made to purchase it. The second indenture, signed on 12 November 1772, was to purchase the land. Information on the back of each document shows they were proved and recorded in the Loudoun County Court on 23 November 1772.

CONTAINER LIST

Folder 1	Land Indenture dated 11 November 1772
Folder 2	Land Indenture dated 12 November 1772